

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 SSM-05 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00
USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
/070 W

-----181530Z 110994 /46

O R 181451Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5326
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 1960

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: IS, US, PLO
SUBJECT: ISRAELI PAPERS REPORT CARTER HANDSHAKE WITH PLO REP

1. AFTERNOON DAILIES MARCH 18 REPORTED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER SHOOK HANDS WITH A PLO REPRESENTATIVE IN NEW YORK. (NO EDITORIAL COMMENT ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON). YEDIOT CARRIED A BRIEF ITEM QUOTING PRESIDENT CARTER AS SAYING THAT THE HANDSHAKE HAD NO POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE. THE PLO REPRESENTATIVE, HASSAN ABD AL RAHMAN, SAID "I SHOOK THE PRESIDENT'S HAND AND ASKED HOW HE WAS. CARTER ONLY SMILED AND SAID NOTHING."

2. MAARIV CARRIED A LONGER REPORT, WHICH WE REPEAT IN FULL.

BEGIN TEXT.

3. U.S. PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER SHOOK THE HAND OF
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THE PLO REPRESENTATIVE AT THE U.N. THE PRESIDENT KNEW THAT THIS WAS THE DEPUTY HEAD OF THE PLO DELEGATION BECAUSE HIS NAME HAD BEEN PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED. BUT MR. CARTER AND THE PLO REPRESENTATIVE DID NOT EXCHANGE A SINGLE WORD. YESTERDAY MORNING IT STILL WAS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THE GUESTS WOULD BE PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT OR WHETHER MR. CARTER WOULD STROLL

AMONG THE GUESTS FREELY, SPEAKING ONLY TO A FEW IMPORTANT HEADS OF STATE. ACCORDING TO ONE VERSION, MR. CARTER WAS TAKEN ABACK BY THE LARGE NUMBER OF GUESTS WHO HAD ARRIVED AND WHO INCLUDED NOT ONLY THE PLO REPRESENTATIVES, BUT ALSO LEADING NEW YORK FIGURES, WELL-KNOWN ACTORS, WRITERS AND ARTISTS.

4. TO AVOID OFFENDING IMPORTANT PERSONALITIES AND FOREIGN DIPLOMATS MR. CARTER GAVE LAST-MINUTE INSTRUCTIONS TO THE HEAD OF PROTOCOL FOR THE GUESTS TO PASS HIM IN A RECEPTION LINE, AND IN THIS WAY THE PLO REPRESENTATIVE WAS PRESENTED TO MR. CARTER.

5. THE PRESIDENT DID NOT EXCHANGE A SINGLE WORD WITH THE PLO MAN. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE TALKED AT LENGTH WITH ISRAEL'S REPRESENTATIVE, HAIM HERZOG. STANDING NEXT TO THE PRESIDENT WERE MR. CYRUS VANCE, PROF. BRZEZINSKI, AMBASSADOR YOUNG AND THE WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN. ALL FOUR SEEMED SOMEWHAT DISTRACTED. EVERYONE ASSURED HERZOG THAT THE RECEPTION WAS NOT BEING HELD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ORIGINAL PLAN.

6. EARLIER THERE HAD BEEN EXCHANGES OF CABLES BETWEEN JERUSALEM AND THE ISRAEL DELEGATION TO THE U.N. IN JERUSALEM THERE WAS ANNOYANCE AT CARTER'S RECENT DECLARATIONS AT LAST WEEK'S PRESS CONFERENCE, AND EVEN MORE OVER HIS STATEMENTS CONCERNING A "HOMELAND" FOR THE PALESTINIANS AND THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD SHAKE THE HAND OF THE PLO REPRESENTA-
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TIVE. PRIME MINISTER RABIN AND OTHER SENIOR MINISTERS FIRST CONSIDERED INSTRUCTING ISRAEL'S U.N. REPRESENTATIVE TO BOYCOTT THE RECEPTION, BUT MR. HERZOG SENT SEVERAL CABLES, EXPRESSING HIS OPINION THAT BY BOYCOTTING THE RECEPTION ISRAEL WOULD INVEST IT WITH UNDUE IMPORTANCE.

7. A SHORT TIME LATER MR. HERZOG RECEIVED A TELEGRAM FROM JERUSALEM, INSTRUCTING HIM TO ATTEND THE RECEPTION HOSTED BY THE U.N. SECRETARY-GENERAL IN HONOR OF THE U.S. PRESIDENT. MR. HERZOG CAME ALONE, AS HIS WIFE WAS NOT IN NEW YORK.

8. AT THE RECEPTION, PRESIDENT CARTER DID NOT SIT IN THE SPECIAL SEAT DESTINED FOR THE GUEST OF HONOR, BUT TOOK AN ORDINARY CHAIR, WITH DR. WALDHEIM NEXT TO HIM.

9. ON THE PLANE CARRYING HIM TO NEW YORK, MR.

CARTER TOLD NEWSMEN THAT WHEN HE AGREED TO ATTEND
THE U.N. RECEPTION HE HAD NOT KNOWN THAT PLO REPRESENTATIVES WOULD BE PRESENT. END OF TEXT.
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Message Attributes

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